Crash of helicopter manufactured by HAL

1413. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Advance Light Helicopter (Dhruv) sold to Ecuadorian Air Force by HAL crashed in Quito during a military parade injuring two of its pilots recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by HAL to rectify the major setback as it will affect India's efforts to market its indigenous helicopter in overseas market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Ecuadorian Air Force have successfully carried out several missions on Dhruv Helicopters in their difficult terrains. As per the reported statements, it appears that the Helicopter may have been maneuvered excessively. The built-in safety features ensured that both the Pilots walked away without any major injuries after crash landing.

(c) HAL has assured the Ecuadorian Government that HAL will meet all the contractual obligations and are committed to provide full support required by Ecuadorian Air Force. There have been no indications that existing potential customers have viewed this accident as a set-back on Dhruv Helicopters' capabilities.

Effect of offset policy on import of defence equipments

1414. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of defence equipments imported during the last three years;

(b) whether there has been any reduction in import content after the introduction of the off set policy;

(c) if so, details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) On an average, the expenditure on import of capital equipment for the armed forces has been about 30% during the last three years.

The offset clause is applicable for procurement proposals where indicative cost is Rs.300 crore or more and the schemes are categorized as 'Buy (Global)' involving outright purchase from foreign/Indian vendors and 'Buy and Make with Transfer of Technology' *i.e.* purchase from foreign vendor followed by Licensed Production. The offset policy has been incorporated in the Defence Procurement Procedure since 2005 and its effects would be known in due course.

Procurement of defence equipment is made by the Government from various indigenous as well as foreign sources to meet the requirements of the Armed Forces. The import option is exercised when it is necessary to procure the items within a definite timeframe on operational grounds to bridge the capability gaps and normally when such equipment cannot be sourced indigenously within a specified timeframe.

Compensation for next of kin of soldiers killed

1415. SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of soldiers killed during the last five years;

(b) whether Government has given full compensation to the next of kin of those killed during the said period; and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the list?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) A number of soldiers of the Indian army have made the supreme sacrifice of laying down their lives for the cause of the nation, in the last 5 years. The next of kin of all such battle casualties (fatal) are granted full entitled compensation except in cases where legal cases are filed or necessary formalities are incomplete.

Use of army to tackle naxalism

†1416. SHRI KAPTAN SINGH SOLANKI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Army will be used to tackle the biggest internal problem 'Naxalism' in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any high-powered co-ordination committee has been constituted between Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Home Affairs to deal with naxalism; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) There is no proposal under consideration to commit Army in anti-naxalite operations.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

Indigenous technology for Arjun tank and Tejas aircraft

†1417. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the engine, gear and arm system used in Indian made Arjun Tank is imported;

(b) if so, the countries from where imported;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.